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[For information on the horse medicine cult and its bundle, see all of the above categories.]

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[For information on shamans, see Category 756; on herbalists and midwives, see Category 759; on magicians and diviners, see Category 791; and on bundle-owners and leaders of ceremonies, see Category 793.]

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

a strange painted lodge in the camp. He reported its presence to the chief, who asked him to go see what the strange people were doing in his camp. When the young man looked into the lodge, he saw the girl, recognized her as the one who had been lost some time before, and hurried to tell her parents of her return. When her father saw the new lodge and the strange bundle, he asked her, "What are these?"

She explained, "They are Thunder's lodge and his medicine pipe. They are presents to you from my father-in-law, Thunder." » » »

Each year thereafter the medicine pipe was opened shortly after the first thunder was heard in spring. In his ritual the medicine pipe man carried his sacred pipe out of the lodge, raised it toward the sky, and prayed for the welfare of his people and that no one in his camp would be killed by thunder (lightning) that year. The pipe bundle also was opened when a camp member, in fulfillment of a vow to have the ritual performed should a dear one recover from sickness or survive dangers on the warpath, made a payment of valuable possessions to the medicine pipe man. It was opened when the tobacco in the bundle was renewed and when it was transferred to a new owner.

The highly respected medicine pipe men were easily recognized by their peculiar hairdress. Each let his hair grow long and wore it gathered in a large forward-projecting coil over his forehead. These men played an important role in camp movements, always leading the moving camp. Their pipes had a unique function in oath taking. A Blackfoot Indian who swore upon the medicine pipe made as solemn a pledge of speaking the truth as the Christian who swore upon the Bible in a court of law. These Indians believed that any man who violated his oath taken upon the medicine pipe would surely die.

There were nearly a score of medicine pipe bundles among the three Blackfoot tribes. The most sacred object in each bundle was a long wooden pipestem elaborately ornamented with plumes and such other decorations as eagle feathers, hair or weasel-skin pendants, trade beads, bells, or ribbons. The stone

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

move was to be made so that everyone would be in readiness to make an early start the next morning.[69]

In planning the movement of a Blackfoot band, the band chief consulted other prominent men of the band before announcing the move. He called upon certain individuals in the band to act as scouts, side, and rear guards.

Among the Blackfoot the medicine pipe owner played an important role in camp movement. In dismantling his lodge on the morning of the move he placed his bundle at some distance from it if the move was to be a long one; he left it standing on its tripod near the lodge if the move was to be a short one. He took pains to point his pipe in the direction the camp was to go. Before he set out, the medicine pipe owner made a smudge and prayed for the safe journey of the camp, that no accident would befall any member and that no enemies would be encountered en route. The medicine pipe man led the main body when camp moved.[70]

PACKING UP

Experience made the Blackfoot efficient in packing their belongings quickly on the morning camp was to move. Except for the lodge and bedding most items were packed ready for transportation before the morning of the move. They needed only to be tied in their proper places on horses or travois. This greatly expedited last-minute preparations. J. M. Stanley (1855, p. 448), who accompanied Low Horn's Piegan village of 90 lodges on its move southward to Fort Benton in the fall of 1853, wrote that "in less than an hour the whole camp was under way".[71]

As among other Plains Indian tribes Blackfoot packing of lodges and furnishings was women's work. In a household of several wives the husband's favorite wife served as job foreman, supervising the work of the other wives, the aged women, and grown girls of the

[69] Larocque's description of movements of the entire Crow camp in the summer of 1805, reveals that Crow custom was similar to that described by living Blackfoot informants, at that early date. He observed that the principal chief consulted the other chiefs before deciding upon a move, then issued the order. That chief's lodge was the first to be taken down on the morning of the move (Larocque, 1910). Tixier (1940, p. 179) noted that heralds announced breaking of camp the night before the Osage hunting camp made a move during the summer of 1840. As early as 1776, the elder Henry (1809, p. 310) observed the Assiniboin chief's practice of notifying the camp of the next day's march in advance. My Kiowa informants stated that in that tribe the principal chief's decision was made known to tribal members through his announcer the night before camp movement, and that this chief led the procession when camp was under way.

[70] Perhaps the Mandan and Hidatsa had a very similar custom. Alexander Henry (1897, vol. 1, p. 369), who accompanied these tribes on a visit to the Cheyenne in 1806, observed that Le Borgne's "grand pipe of ceremony" was carried at the head of the procession. Boller (1868, p. 277) noted that Poor Wolf "carried the pipe" and led the line of march when the Mandan-Hidatsa moved camp ca. 1860.

[71] Denig (1953, p. 86) credited the Crow with being able to pack and start on the march in "less than 20 minutes."

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

on the way home and that none of their horse's feet would be harmed by rocks. He gave it to one of the sick men and told him to take it to a stream on leaving the house, pray to it, and throw it into deep water. Then the tongue soup was distributed to all those present. Having consumed it, they went home.

In many respects the horse dance may be regarded as a typical Blackfoot ceremony. Wissler (1912 a, pp. 248–271) has pointed out that singing, drumming, dancing with sacred paraphernalia, praying, the passing of the pipe, face painting, the recognition of taboos, and the following of strictly formalized and prolonged ritual patterns were common characteristics of Blackfoot bundle ceremonies. Even the employment of dry-painted altars appeared in other important bundle ceremonies (ibid., pp. 255–257). R. N. Wilson (1909, pp. 16–20) in his detailed description of the use of a dry-painted altar in the Sun Dance ritual, noted that this altar was destroyed before the medicine woman's party left her lodge. In that painting black symbolized night, and yellow day.[80]

Aside from the horse symbolism characteristic of the horse dance, the most distinctive feature appears to be the repeated and consistent employment of the ritual number 3. To my knowledge this is the only Blackfoot ceremony in which that ritual number occurs. In fact Wissler regarded 4 as the ritual number of all Blackfoot ceremonies, including the horse dance (Wissler, 1912 a, pp. 110, 247). In this detail his account of the ceremony is in error.

USES OF HORSE MEDICINE

The powers of Blackfoot horse medicine men, as explained by informants, were many and varied. Not only were they credited with the ability to control the health and actions of horses but they were thought to have been able to influence the movements of buffalo and to cure and aid the activities of humans.

Horse medicine was most commonly employed in the treatment of sick, injured, wounded, or exhausted horses. Curing of sick horses generally involved the administration of medicine by nose or mouth as a part of the ritual. Owners of valuable horses generally entrusted their treatment to experienced horse medicine men when these animals were ill. The medicine men were paid for their services.

Three Calf recalled that Wolf Calf frequently was called upon to doctor horses that were staggering and near death. Wolf Calf rubbed his medicine on the horse's nose, back, and kidneys, then shook its tail four (three?) times. If the horse made no move Wolf Calf told the owner there was no hope for it. If it moved it would get well.

[80] Wissler (1912 a, p. 257), has pointed out the occurrence of dry painting among the Dakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho of the Plains, as well as among the Southwestern tribes.

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

medicine men they were wrapped in separate bundles when not in use. Wallace Night Gun said that men who were not horse medicine cult members were known to have dreamed of one of these bundles. If the lay dreamer wished to make a bundle like the one seen in his dream he went to a horse medicine man and asked for help. The latter then told him to make the bridle just as it appeared in his dream and to bring it to him to give it power. Upon payment the horse medicine man gave the owner several little packages of horse medicine to tie to the "horse bridle," together with instructions for the use of these medicines. The owner attached this "horse bridle" to his horse when he rode to war or rode in the riding big dance. It was believed to make the horse lively, to keep it from falling, and to keep enemy bullets from hitting it. Night Gun said men who dreamed of these bridles also received songs in their dreams which were added to the collection of horse medicine cult songs. He claimed there were few of these bridles among the Piegan in buffalo days. The only one I saw on the Blackfeet Reservation was owned by a cult member.

Wissler (1912 a, p. 111) noted the introduction of horse medicine ritual into the medicine pipe ceremony of the Blackfoot. Night Gun said it was common practice for a medicine-pipe owner to ask a horse medicine man to insure that the horse used to carry the medicine pipe would not fall or be harmed while camp was on the move. The horse medicine man used his sacred rope and whip in the ceremony of blessing the horse of the medicine pipe man. He sang and transferred three horse medicine songs to the pipe owner. He also transferred some of his power to the whip and rope of that man. It is noteworthy that a whip and rope are among the objects in the typical Blackfoot medicine pipe bundle, and that horse medicine songs appear in that ceremonial ritual. McClintock (1948, pp. 56–60) described a medicine pipe transfer he witnessed in which not only the whip and rope but also the saddle, bridle, and horse used to transport the pipe were transferred. In that transfer ceremony four (three?) horse songs were sung with great care "lest misfortune befall their horses." There were restrictions that the horse employed to carry the medicine pipe must be used only by its owner "lest some of his horse-herd sicken and die," and that the medicine pipe owner "must not strike a dog or horse, nor cut a horse's tail." The medicine-pipe owner who had purchased three horse medicine cult songs was privileged to attend the horse dance and to sing those three songs during the ceremony.

Less certain is the relationship between horse medicine and the horse-painted lodge formerly found among the Piegan. Wissler and Duvall (1908, p. 94) have published Head Carrier's version of the origin legend of the horse-painted lodge. It is noteworthy that Head Carrier was a North Piegan horse medicine man. John Old Chief

BIRTH CONTROL

824 842 778 [847] [779] In the matter of birth control, the Blackfoot practiced it in two ways. Conception was thought to be avoided through the use of a special ceremonial bundle and abortions were performed with the aid of an herbal brew. The former required the services of a diviner who professed the power to prevent conception while the latter was an event that could be accomplished by the mother alone.

[126] [791] Several of these anti-conception bundles, constructed between 1880-1930, have been collected and the authors reported of at least fourteen more on the reservations of the Blackfoot, still being used by elderly diviners, all women.

[301] [237] [386] [532] There is a consistant pattern of bundle contents (see Figs. 27 &28); otter-skin wristlets each with an incised bone bead, the design representing a snake; yellow ochre in a skinbag; and a quantity of pulverized plant material in another skinbag. An exception to this pattern is the bundle collected by Ewers which contained a beaded, snake-shaped belt and lacked wristlets. [291] [301]

824 778 791 842 [302] A woman seeking conception control would approach a diviner for instruction in the use of the bundle. The diviner would, for a fee, use her bundle on the patient or make one for her. Without going into the details of the ceremony, we should note that the major part of the ritual involves the ochreing of the body from the head down to the navel and from the feet to the knees, thereby isolating the reproductive area. The wristlets were worn for a prescribed period during which time the patient was enjoined to observe certain taboos. The ceremony was usually performed in the spring when the snakes emerged from hibernation. [301] [784] [825]

Part III

PLANTS USED IN THE TREATMENT OF SICKNESS

Overview

755 [757] The Blackfoot practised two kinds of medicine, one of which was distinguished by its reliance on divination. The other consisted of common remedies which were available to all.

[462] [791] [756] There was a general procedure in the divination of disease and there is evidence to show that there were as many women diviners as men. (Although it is common practice among anthropologists to denote this kind of ritual curing as shamanism, we take exception to that in using the term divination, as we believe that shamanism as practised in the Tibetan sense, does not apply to the medical treatment of the Plains Indians).

787 [785] In order to obtain power for the purpose of curing an individual would undertake a vision quest which involved prolonged isolation and fasting.

[776] [778] If the quest was successful, the source of power, usually a spiritual being in animal form would instruct him in the songs, ritual and construction [554] of the curing bundle. There are many variations of the titles of men who have received power, a common one among the Blood Indians is "natoosi - inaipi" or "sun comes down" another given to us by G.B. Grinell was used among the south Peigans, "i-so-kin-ah-kin" or "heavy singer for the sick".

756 422 778 124 These bundles remained the personal property of the diviner and could not be transferred. Indeed, the source of power was not to be revealed to anyone. We have only been able to obtain an account of this vision quest from one diviner who has stopped practising. Other informants have given important information of the patterns of divining disease but have with-held their own source of power.

[p.62]

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

nary puffball, like those that grow all over the prairie. That night she looked up and saw a new bright star in the sky.

After some time passed, this same woman made a vow to put up a Sun Dance. Along with the other articles used by the holy woman, she carried her sacred digging stick and a fresh tall leaf of the wild turnip. She taught the others the ceremony that went with them, and these things have been carried on to this day. In addition, she painted round circles all the way around the bottom of her father's lodge, in memory of her little child. Most painted lodges now have these circles, and that is why they are called puffballs, or fallen stars from the sky.

A GRANDMOTHER WHO HAD THE POWER TO CALL GHOSTS

When my father was young he spent a lot of time with his mother's brother, Willie Eagle Plume. This same man spent a lot of time with my husband and me in the last years before he passed away. His mother was named SikskiAki, which is the name that I am known by in the Blackfoot language. He gave my husband the name Natosina, or Sun Chief, which had once belonged to his father. Shortly before his passing he gave our youngest son his own name, Atsitsina, or Prairie Owl Man, to complete a trio of names that had been around him since childhood.

Willie Eagle Plume's father was also known as Eagle Plume. He was born around 1850 to a woman whose name, Otsani, can no longer be translated. She was one of several wives of a chief named Not-Scared-of-Gros-Ventre-Indians. Some early trader misunderstood her name, Otsani, and thought it was Old Charlie, which became her nickname for the rest of her life.

Otsani lived to a very old age, spending her final years in

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

the home of her son, Eagle Plume, and in the company of her grandchildren, like Atsitsina. He used to tell us about her, and the following is one of his stories.

"I will tell you a story about my grandmother, Otsani. She was my father's mother, and she used to carry me on her back when I was small. She was a very powerful person. She knew all our religious ceremonies and she doctored the people. Among her doctoring methods she used cactus spines and porcupine quills to perform what is now called acupuncture. She taught my father how to do this, and he once cured a very badly swollen knee of mine with that method. Sometimes my grandmother also used this treatment to draw the bad spirits out of a person's body if some enemy had put a spell into them and made them feel bad. She had the Power to communicate with ghosts, and I once saw her do this.

"One time, when I was still a young man, there was no food at my father's house. My brother Doesn't-Own-Nice-Horses [Jack Low Horn] and a cousin of ours said: 'We are going to go out and raid a cow so we can have some food.' Somebody told them: 'You better not do it—the old man will hear about it and he will get mad. He doesn't like us to do anything against the law. Anyone that is caught killing will get lots of years in jail.' They didn't listen and they went out and killed a cow. They butchered the cow in a real hurry because they were scared they might get caught with it.

"When they had gotten all the butchered meat home, my cousin discovered that his knife was lost. He said: 'If the police find it I will be caught, because I have my brand carved in the handle.' His father, Sits-with-His-Chest-Out, told him: 'That old lady, Otsani, has the Power to find things that are lost. Give her this tobacco and ask her to find your knife. You will get put in jail if the police find it first.'

"My cousin took the tobacco over and gave it to the old lady and asked her to help find his knife. She tasted the tobacco, because she couldn't see very well. 'Oh, some real

boughs. At 1 p.m. the Lodge was quite completed and quietness reigned in the camp, broken only by the occasional shouting of some chief calling guests to a feast, or a caller assembling the members of some fraternity. 796 346 [203]

With the completion of the Holy Lodge, the participants returned to their own lodges to await the next ceremony which was, in effect, the start of the second half of the Okan. The first four days had led up to the construction of it; the last three or four days were taken up with ceremonies within it. 796

The next part of the Okan began when two men came out of their lodges wearing sacred dress and carrying fans of eagle wings and boughs of creeping juniper. Four old men came behind them with hand drums, singing a sacred song. The two men, known as the Weather Dancers, danced forward to the rhythm of the song, at the same time blowing on whistles of eagle bone, which stuck from their mouths. [237] [824] [533] [534] [237]

The Weather Dancers are the priests for the activities that take place inside the Medicine Lodge. The People placed their spiritual faith in these men, who were considered to have Power to attract good weather to the encampment. It was up to the Weather Dancers to decide how many more days the Okan ceremonies would continue, and they would remain within the Medicine Lodge throughout that time to fast, pray, and dance. It is as a result of their duties that the Okan is often referred to as a Sun Dance. 796 791 [789] [787]

The only clothing the Weather Dancers usually wore were moccasins and breechcloths. They painted their bodies with designs shown to them in dreams or given by some previous dancer. Around their heads and wrists they wore wreaths of creeping juniper boughs, and eagle bone whistles hung from thongs around their necks. On their backs they sometimes wore white robes, pinned together in front of their necks. They tried to concentrate their thoughts on the Holy Power that Sun passes on to all the creatures on Earth. 796 791 292 [302] [787] [824] [237] [534]

Power that Sun passes on to all the creatures on Earth. 796 791

On their way to the Medicine Lodge, the Weather Dancers made four stops. At each stop they intensified their holy thoughts and danced more vigorously, while the drumming and singing continued behind them. The People stood quietly before their tipis, watching the brightly colored dancers make their way around the north side of the Medicine Lodge and then enter through the large opening on the east side of the cottonwood boughs. [535]

The Weather Dancers entered this sacred booth and sat down, facing the Center Pole and the entrance of the Holy Lodge at the east. The holy people followed and sat down on their robes at the northwest side. The drummers sat on logs at the southwest side and were soon joined by several old men who knew the ceremonial songs. People approached the Holy Lodge to see inside, so that the entrance was blocked. Others found places around the outside where they could look through.

According to our Old Man, who was a young boy at the 1892 Okan, the head Weather Dancer was Ki-soum, or Sun, still remembered as one of our finest holy men. Wilson often refers to this man by the name Moon. The other was a former Weather Dancer who had vowed to help Ki-soum. Among the small bundle of things Ki-soum had brought into the Weather Dancers' booth was a black-bowled pipe. He filled the pipe with sacred tobacco and handed it to the drummer nearest the booth. The drummer raised the stem, prayed for the spiritual success of the People, lit the pipe, and passed it among the other drummers to smoke. It was then passed into the booth, where the Weather Dancers smoked quietly. [276] [778] [782]

When the pipe was smoked out, Ki-soum signaled the drummers, who began to drum and sing a Weather Dancers song. The Weather Dancers placed their bone whistles between their lips and stood up. Raising their heads so they [533] [534] [535]

could see the top of the sacred Pole, they blew on their whistles with short blasts while they bounced up and down with the drum beats. 796 791

Before them was the center of the Earth, marked by the sacred Center Pole. From Earth it reached to the heavens above, symbolically connecting the two into one Universe. The bright colors of the many offerings fluttered at the top of the Center Pole, marking the place where Sky and Earth met. The fork joint represented that all the directions in the Universe are joined together by the Great Spirit to make One. The prayers of the Above Spirits were represented by Wind, which could be heard all around; the prayers of the Earth Spirits were represented by the rustling of the green leaves on the cottonwood boughs. [533] [534] [535] 796 772

"Cheep—cheep—cheep—cheep," sounded the eagle bone whistles as the Weather Dancers rocked on the balls of their feet, accompanied by the rhythm of the drumming and chanting. If a cloud threatened to hide Sun's light, the intensity of the dancing and music increased until the cloud passed out of sight. 791 796 535 789

I believe in this Power of Universal Harmony, for I experienced it myself during the Piegan Medicine Lodge celebration of 1972. The former Weather Dancer, an old man named Makes Summer, taught me the way to use spiritual power passed on from the long-ago. As dark rain clouds threatened overhead, the singing and dancing became more and more intense. The clouds finally separated and Sun shined brightly until the ceremony was over; not until then did it begin to rain. No one remembers a Medicine Lodge ceremony that was ever disturbed by rain. [123]

Wilson brought his notebook and joined the crowd around the Holy Lodge: 796 431

A, [i.e., the Weather Dancers--Analyst]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 35-A]

[p. 35-A]

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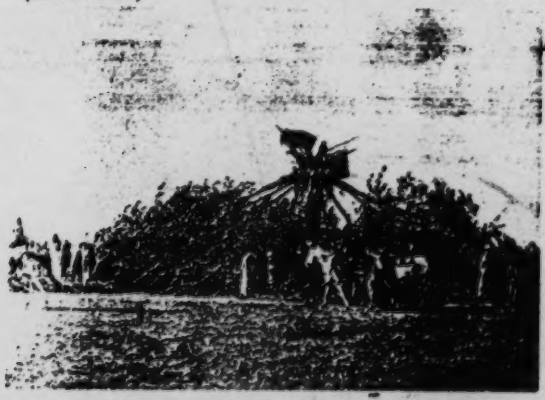
Inside the 1892 Medicine Lodge. In the foreground is the pit where the sticks representing war adventures were burned. Behind the pit is the sacred Center Pole, with offerings tied to it. The man standing is believed to be the Weather Dancer, Ki-soum. The others are his drummers. (R. N. Wilson)



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Outside the 1892 Medicine Lodge, while ceremonies take place inside. (R. N. Wilson)

[p. 35-B]

they were the first to perform in the Medicine Lodge. This was an opportunity for the societies to inspire the People, as well as themselves, with their ceremonies and comradeship. And it was an honor for members to donate food to the gathered People, who were given good thoughts through the gesture.

After the presentation, the People were asked to return to their lodges and spend the night quietly. There was to be no noise, especially near the Medicine Lodge. The Weather Dancers were fasting and meditating on the Holy Powers created by the sacred encampment.

THE SELF-TORTURE CEREMONIES

Another group to participate in the Medicine Lodge ceremony came to fulfill their own vows. These were men who had made vows of physical sacrifice in exchange for spiritual help from Sun. Such vows were usually made during dangerous situations, perhaps on the hunt or warpath, when death seemed imminent. A vowing man might call out to Sun, "Help me, O holy Sun, my Father, and let me see you again with happiness. Give me your strength so that I may survive this danger, and I will give myself to you. I will help my People to remember your Holy Power by performing the physical torture dance during the next Holy Lodge ceremony of our People." Fulfilling such vows was truly a Sun Dance, and inspiring to those who watched.

WILSON'S OBSERVATIONS: 1892

The last time self-torture vows were fulfilled during a Blood Medicine Lodge ceremony was in 1892. The days of warpaths were already past. Although our young men still went on regular horse raids then, there was seldom any fighting, even when the raiders were caught. Government agents knew that the self-torture ceremony inspired a spirit of adventure, which they opposed. Follow-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 37A]
[P. 36-B]

OLD CHARLIE

Natosina's mother, Old Charlie, lived to a very old age. She stayed at the home of her son, along the Bullhorn Coulee, where she could see her grandchildren growing up. She was a very successful doctor. She used cactus spines and porcupine quills to perform a kind of acupuncture that was used by some of our doctors. Here is a story about her told by Atsitsina.

I will tell you a story of my grandmother, Otsah. She was my father's mother. She used to carry me on her back in a blanket. She was a very Powerful person. She used acupuncture to take the evil out of an affected person's body.

At my father's house they had no food. Doesn't Own Nice Horses [Jack Low Horn] and a cousin of ours said, "We are going to go out and raid a cow so we can have some food." Somebody told them, "You better not do it. The Old Man will hear about it and he will get pretty mad. He doesn't like us to do anything against the law. Anyone that is caught killing will get lots of years in jail." They didn't listen. They went out and killed a cow along the Bullhorn. They really needed food badly. They butchered the cow in a real hurry because they were scared they might get caught with it.

So they packed the meat home. When they got home with it my cousin found out that he had lost his knife. He said, "If the police find it I will be caught. I have my brand carved in the handle." My father's brother-in-law, Sits-with-His-Chest-Out, told his son, "That old lady, she has Power to find things that are lost. Give her this real tobacco and ask her to find your knife."

My cousin took the real tobacco over and gave it to the old lady and asked her to find his knife. She tasted the tobacco, she couldn't see too well, and she said, "Oh, some real tobacco." She got out some dishes and she put some raw kidney and

liver on the table, and a glass of water. Then she sang some songs. She told us to turn the lights off. She sat there quietly and we all waited. Pretty soon the dogs started barking outside and there was a noise like someone running up to the house and breathing hard. It was a ghost!

The old lady told the ghost, "Oki, there is some water for you. Drink it." There was a sound like glass tinkling against something solid. Then she said, "Oki, there is some food for you." There were more funny noises. Then she offered the ghost a smoke and we could see the tobacco being smoked. Then she told the ghost what the problem was, and asked him to go and look for the boy's knife. The old lady told us to turn the lights back on. Nobody was there and all the food and water were gone.

A while later the dogs started barking again. The old lady said to hurry up and turn the lights off. Then we heard a loud thumping noise. After that she offered the ghost another smoke and then he left. We turned the lights back on and found the knife lying on the floor. I know that old lady was very Powerful because everybody saw this happen. She didn't know where the knife was and she never left us to go and get it.

Natosina was kept so busy with his sacred duties that he never cared much for the modern ways that were coming to our People. Most of his visitors followed the Old Ways. His Powers were so strong and had so many obligations associated with them that others were afraid to come near him. Whenever he had a bad dream he would call his children and grandchildren to him, as well as any other nearby relatives, and pray for them while painting their faces with sacred red earth.

One of his dream obligations required that he never be interrupted while smoking. He communicated with Spirits then, and an interruption might break his contact and leave his Spirit outside his body.

One time SikskiAki's father and uncle, when

[Nighttime Ceremony, Ca. 1972]

Then, while we sat waiting for the others to arrive, Atsitsina asked the Old Man, "Omach-Kinna [Old Man], why don't you tell our grandson the secret for reaching old age? Maybe he will tell me, and then I will become as old as you are." 886

The Old Man kept looking at the altar for a time, then he began to speak: 791 787 952

My parents took me to an old holy woman who had a lot of Power. She was the one who foresaw that I would reach old age. Her name was Otter Woman. She told my parents, "This boy will reach old age. I have foreseen it. But he will have to face a test right now to prove that he is the right one. Do you wish to risk his life to have him meet this test?" My parents had a lot of faith in that old woman's Power, so they told her, "Yes, go ahead."

I was only about five months old when all this took place. The old woman began by piercing my ears with porcupine quills. Next, she buried me under the earth; I was not told how deep, but she must have left my face free so that I could keep breathing. Then she built a fire of dry cottonwood sticks over my body. She told my parents that the Earth Powers would protect me from harm if I was the one in her dreams. No harm came to me. Then she bundled me up in blankets and tied me into the branches of a tree. She and my parents stood below and mourned for me as though I were dead. She told them that from then on, the Spirits of death would be satisfied and would not come to bother me with misfortune. When they brought me down from the tree she told my parents, "This boy has proved that he is the one who will have the Powers I saw in my dream. He will belong to Sun from now on. Sun will care for him and he will have the Power to help his People." [237] [372] [824] [776]

Then the old woman prayed: "Sun, I give you this boy so that you will guide him like I 791 952 304 782 787

[Nighttime Ceremony, Ca. 1972]

saw in my dream. Here is a part of him to prove that we are sincere and that he will always remember you." That old woman took out her knife and cut off the end of my little finger from my left hand, you can see where it is missing, and she left the end of my finger out there on the prairie as an offering. That is when I was first told that I would have old age.

After the Old Man's story, we sat quietly for a while. Then Atsitsina remarked that he had not yet been purified for the recent death in his family. He could not attend a holy ceremony until he symbolically cast the Spirit of death away from himself. He asked me to step outside with him and to bring along a few leaves of sage from the bunches by the altar. He had already taught me what to do to purify someone in our Old Way. I rolled the sage leaves into a small ball between my palms and prayed, asking for help that Atsitsina may forget what has happened and go on with the Good Spirits again. Four times I prayed and asked the various Powers to give him strength and encouragement, and then I handed him the ball of sage. He prayed and brushed his body four times with it, then told the sage to take the evil from his body as he cast it away toward the east, the direction of the new day.

A truck arrived bringing SikskiAki's parents and our two boys. Wolf Child quietly walked into the room and sat by me. The Old Man squinted to see who it was, then greeted Wolf Child: "Ahhh, Makwi Poka, shake hands!" The Old Man was very fond of Wolf Child. The boy prayed enthusiastically and made hand signs while trying to sing along with our holy songs.

NinnaOnesta and his wife arrived with a box full of bowls, utensils, pipe and blankets, and two cushions—in case our seating proved uncomfortable. The Old Man gave NinnaOnesta a seat on the far left, where he usually sits to call out his raiding exploits.

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
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her travois. While when the other brush was brought in there was much shooting and shouting, there are now no demonstrations of any kind, but absolute silence.

The Weather Dancers.

Early on the fifth day, a booth is built inside the dancing lodge opposite the entrance. A slight excavation about six feet square is made over which is erected a shelter of green cottonwood boughs, open on the side facing the sun pole. Before the middle of the day, a procession of one or more men supposed to have power over the weather, attended by drummers, proceeds by stages from the medicine woman's tipi to this booth. They pause four times and dance, facing alternately the east and the west. They hold whistles of bone in their mouths, which are sounded in unison with the dancing. The procession is of two transverse lines, the dancers, in front, the drummers and singers behind. A great deal of dancing is done between the entrance to the dancing lodge and the booth. At intervals during the day they stand before the booth and dance to the east and west: the drummers are now stationed on the south side of the booth where women also assemble for the singing. The dancing is chiefly an up and down movement produced by flexing the knees, the eyes are directed toward the sun and wing-like movements of the hands are made in the same direction. The dancers wear breechcloth and moccasins and usually a robe around the waist. Their faces and bodies are painted according to their own medicines and medicine objects worn on their heads.

It is stated that there is but one weather dancer, but others may join under certain conditions. In practice this seems to amount to there being a director or leader in the dance, at least such was the case in 1903 and 1904. In 1904 the two assistant dancers went to the medicine woman's tipi to paint themselves and began their procession from there, while the leader approached in a similar manner from his own tipi, the two forming one procession before the east side of the dancing lodge was reached. The leading dancer wore a special ceremonial robe, headdress, and several medicine objects, which have been described in Volume 7 (pp. 93–99).

These objects and their medicine functions may be regarded as esoteric in so far as they are not absolutely essential to the office of leading dancer. Yet, this same individual seems to have performed this function for a number of years. Clark mentions strings of feathers tied to the finger of this dancer.[1] In 1904 there were two assistant dancers. Both wore headdresses

[1] Clark, W. P., *The Indian Sign Language* (Philadelphia, 1885), 72

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
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somewhat like that of their leader. One was fully dressed with a blanket around his waist; the other was nude to the belt. The latter was painted chiefly in red with a circle in blue on the back and one on the breast. The former had a pair of horizontal lines on each cheek, those on the right, black, on the left, red.

It is said that formerly these dancers were nude, except for the breechcloth and moccasins. The entire body was painted. There seemed to have been no fixed painting, but the sun, moon, and stars were usually represented. Around the head, they wore a wreath of juniper and bands of sagegrass around the neck, wrists, and ankles.

The weather dancers are not permitted to eat or drink during the day. Formerly, they remained in the booth continuously until the evening of the fourth day of their dancing; in recent years, they spend the night at home and return to the booth in the morning.

The functions of these dancers are not clearly understood. They seem to be held responsible for the weather: i. e., upon them falls the duty of preventing rain from interfering with the dancing. Whether they do this because they happen to have independent shamanistic powers or whether it is a mere function of their temporary office in the ceremony, cannot be determined. Other medicinemen often attempt to control the weather during the days preceding the formal entry into the booth as well as during the later days. In 1903 (Piegan) there was a contest between a number of rival medicinemen some of whom conjured for rain, others for fair weather: strange to say, clouds would threaten and then pass away during these days, which coincidence was interpreted as proof of evenly matched powers. Several times one of the partisans of fair weather came out near the site of the dancing lodge and danced to the sun, holding up a small pipe and occasionally shouting. He wore no regalia and danced in a different manner from that observed among the weather dancers at the booth. However, the man who led the weather dancers for many years until his death in 1908, was famous for his control over the weather. Once, it is told, he became enraged at the power making the weather bad, shouting out "Now, you go ahead, if you want to. I have great power and can stop you when I will."

In former times, the dreams of the weather dancers while sleeping in the booth were considered of special supernatural significance, since, it is said, they were *en rapport* with the sun. This *rapport* may account for what seems to be one of their chief functions — blessing the people. During the days they are in the booth, individuals come to them "to be prayed for." They come up and stand before the booth. The dancer takes black paint and paints their faces. Then he prays to the sun for their

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791 welfare. During this part of the ceremony the recipient faces the sun.
782 Again, the medicine-pipes and other ritualistic objects are brought up for
796 the dancer to present to the sun. The pipes he holds up with the stems
[276] towards the sun, whom he addresses at some length, offering him a smoke, making requests, etc., after which he smokes the pipe. All the persons present are then permitted to put their lips to the pipe from which they are supposed to derive great benefits. The dancer also receives offerings made to the sun. A young man may fill a pipe and approach with his offering. The dancer takes the pipe, smokes, prays, paints the man's face, and makes the offering. A woman or child may do this; or a whole [178] family. Formerly, a great deal of old clothing was offered at this time, [425] a custom still practised by the Blood. Also children's moccasins and clothing were offered in this way. As they grew out of them they were given to the sun to promote well-being. In last analysis, it seems that while these dancers are spoken of as weather priests, they are rather sun priests, since through them appeals to the sun are made. It should be noted that they are regarded as independent of and in no way associated with the medicine woman ceremonies or the erection of the dancing lodge, but upon entrance to the booth, the leading weather dancer is said to become the chief and director of all succeeding ceremonies. The length of the ceremony depends entirely upon him and formerly continued as long as he kept his place.

796 Like other rites this one was bought and sold, but it was usual to continue
432 in ownership many years. Anyone could make a vow to dance with the
782 weather dancer and join him in his ceremonies, but such vows were usually made by former owners of the rite. When one makes a vow to purchase the rite, its owner must sell, however reluctant he may be. The transfer must be in the sun dance. It is said that two men once alternately sold to each other for many years so that both could appear in every sun dance.

Dancing.

796 The first ceremony of this character is named the cutting-out dance
535 (to cut out a hole in a robe). It seems to have been performed by a society and occurs early on the fifth day. About four or six old men dance in line with a rawhide which they hold in front of them, singing and beating time on the rawhide with rattles similar to those of the beaver men. The society now divides into two parties, one placing itself north of the center pole, and the other party standing in line south of the center pole. The two parties dance back and forward in front of the pole shooting at it. The

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ksìnæskuyìu. A´inoâχkonoyiu einí. Itáumatapauakimàu. Itâ´χpokyapauauatutsiu, einí ómâχtapakaiepi. Pisamiks itáiinapitakìau. Kokúsi itáipuyìau ninnaiks: Mínatsipiomaχkàt. Aiinapitakiòp. A´mom otsítakaiepi einíua, itauáuaksisau. Itáukakiu, áiknitsauapotoyìu otápimi ótàsiks. Nató´sii mátæsæmiuàie. Aikskísaie, saiipúnikskisàie, itáiikokakìu. O´nokâmitàsina áikaisaiepiskoàu. Mátaisæmòa itáisapiskoχtòaii sámiks kátauaiâχtsimiks. A´istæmisokaniòp: A´iana itsínitau. A´isautomoau. O´ksòkoaiks itápauasainisòiau. O´ksòkoaiks âχkanáikimmatoχkoiîmiaiks. Ki omí aχkúiinnimàni itsitáisapiχ´takiau píksistsimàni. Ki itæχtásainisatsiiau. Omí nínai ápauauaχkai itâ´χkotsiauaie aχkúiinnimàn. Itauánistsìauaie: Annóχk ámoi kitótsisisin. Kímmokit, nitsíkimmatoχkui. Nâχksíkimmokit, naχkítskìχ´t. Minakáuoχs kokuísts, naχkítsàpi motokâ´ni.

Much-driftwood, [and] the Big Sandhills [local names] and [then] turn back. They turned back and moved up to Rotten-willow-wood [a local name]. They were moving this way to Buffalo-lip [and] Many-snakes [also local names]. They finally found the buffalo. Then they began to chase the buffalo. Then they moved about that way, where there were many buffalo. Those that hunted far gave the alarm [suspecting the enemy being near]. In the night the chiefs would talk. [They would say:] Do not go far. We have had alarm. Over there, where there are many buffalo, they ran away [scared by some people, enemies of this tribe]. They [the people of the camp] were careful, they would not turn loose their male horses. They would look at the Sun. If he [the Sun] had stripes on each side [the Sun-dogs], if he had often stripes on the sides, then they were very careful. All the horses were not driven far [from the camp]. After a short time the hunters, that did not listen [to the chiefs, and went far from the camp], were charged on [by the enemies]. Then suddenly there would be said: A certain one was killed. He was scalped. His relations began to go about crying. All his relations would suffer. And they would put weeds cut-up with tobacco in a pipe. And they went crying to him [the medicine-man]. To that man, who was walking about,

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539 Itauániu omá nínàua: Mát-
706 akèopa, áχkitaikakauasàiniop. Itauámiopiu, itáutakomaχkau. A'ïkaistapauakàitapiu. Itásiiχ'tsimau. A'kéks itáitsotsistsinàiau. A'ksistuyitakìks manikâ'piks itápapisamiàu. Itáiniχ'kâχtâχsiau. Omá nínàua áistamaniu: A'koχkoχtasainiòtakiop kaχtóma. Itáu-
[539] matapinimàu. O'mòχksksinòoχpi míkoχponìks ótàsiks, miomáχkaiks. ánniksaie âχpátsiu. A'umató. Iχ'kitópisoò. A'istamoχtàpauàuaχkau, manistápakanàpiχ'pi. Nátsitapii iskunátàpsi miikítapi, ánniksaie áiisapàsapii. Apáikastsinu. Manistápikauaχkùskoχpi, iχ'táuanistàpauàuaχkaiau. Itaiápiau moyí. Itáskomaχkàiau. Ainoásau omím ótapisìni, itáuχkumìau: u'ú +. Amóm soóam itápauχpatskotsiu. Itauánistaiau: Sékamiksik áistomaχkàiau. Nítsapiau. A'uautsìau. Akâ'χtsimaiè atánnimaukâ'n. Omá sóyepiχ'tsìu nitúkskam itapáskòaiks. A'nnaie otáitsinikòkaiks. Otáuanikaiks. A'mistomàuk itaukúnaiiu. A'nnaie túkskam âχkanáitsinikatòmaie. Aukanáiâχtsimìs, itáitanitakìu. A'ikakàniχ'tsiniχ'kaχtâχsin. Ki omá mátsìua manikâ'piua nitástonikìu: Annóχk ksistsikúiχ'k kitáksksinòki. Námaiks túkoχtòtaki. Saioχtótakìnikiau, támakesàpskaukik.

they gave the pipe. They would say to him: Now here is your smoke. Pity me, I have suffered. Pity me, that I may have revenge. Let the nights not be many, that I see [that means: before I see] a scalp.

That man [the medicine-man] would say: We are not women, that we only cry. Then he [the same man] would get on his horse, then he would run around. The people [that followed him] were getting many. They ran near the lodges. The women then yelled. The young men that felt brave yelled. They sang [their war-songs] to themselves. That man [the medicine-man] then would say: We shall also make cry our enemies. Then they began to catch their horses. As they knew their long-winded [literally: hard-winded] horses, [and] hard-runners, they would take those along with them. They started. The warriors went on horseback. They went around, where they were hidden from view. Two strong brave men went ahead to look about. They were the scouts. They went that way, where the coulees were about [they followed the coulees]. They saw the camp [of the enemies]. Then they ran back. When they saw the people [their own party] over there, then they yelled: u'u' +. The warriors then crowded one another about. They were told: The cranes [that means: the scouts] are coming. They really saw [the enemies]. They [the

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bag]. There [where he stuck the claw], he would find roots. With those he would doctor. With those he would cure [a sick person], that he [the sick one] might get stronger from it. In that way he was again given [power] by [the bear]. In that way he profited from the bear, he was pitied by. He was not pitied by him [in that way], that he might be able to take bows and arrows [nowadays it would mean: to take guns]. And now the dogs have separated [after having had their meal].

539 2. Túkskàm nápiu, A'kai-
791 Pekznikoàn, natósiu, kyáioiks omátsikimmok. A'nistau Kyáietapò. I'kstunnatàpsiix'k. Ix'kyáiistoànniu. Mátainoàuats auaχkátseisini. Otánik omíisk kyáioiisk: Mátàksapanasìua kostúmi. Nitúyi annóm otsíx'kauai otáistunnok. Nitúyi nitauáuaχkaiix'k kyáioi. A'nnamaie ikoχkóaimiu opápàukan. Kyáiistoàn, auaχkátsioki, tukskámin otoánni ix'tauáuaχkautsìu. Matápiks ninoásaiks, itáix'tsoχkitsìuaiks, imakóχksipotàuotsìnikaiks. A'isotàminiuaiks. Otokâ'noauaists itáiiniuaiks. Itáumatapsinìuaiks. A'nni ákakχtsinitsìuaiks. Ix'kitsíkami omoχtsínitaiks otoán. Ix'táisapuuistàuaiks kyáioiks. Otómapìsini ix'tsíniu. Annóχk sákiaix'tsìin otoánni. Opápaukan ánnaχkaie sotámitapoχkoàitsim. Opápaukan íkakâχkoàitsimaie. Amói opápaukani, otsístapàpix'kaχtoχsaie, mátoχkonitsimàie omíksisk otsi-

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2. An old man, an ancient Peigan, a medicine-man, was also pitied by bears. He was called Went-to-the-bear. He was very dangerous. He had a bear-knife [a knife given by a bear]. He would not be seen [he was invisible] in the war. He was told by that bear: There will be no blood about your body. This his [own] tribe was afraid of him just the same [as his enemies]. He walked just the same way as the bear. That one profited much from his dream. When we were at war, the bear-knife was his only knife, he fought with in the war. When he saw persons [enemies], he made charges upon them, even if they were shooting back at him. He would just catch them. He would catch them by their hair. Then he began to stab them. He would just kill them with that [knife]. He killed seven

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púmmoaiks. Á'unnyaie áitsiniχ'-kau.

persons with his knife. He used the power of the bears [given to him by the bears]. He died from his old age. To-day his knife is still here. That was one, that profited from his dream. He had many profits from his dream. When he gave it [the power] away, he had again profit from his dream, from those to whom he gave [the power]. That is the end.

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3. Omá nínau omí pískan itsókau. Itsítoχkuipapàuknuaie. Otánik omí papáistamik: Símis amó matápiua. Kitákoχtsitapì nostúmi. Otánikaie: Kitáiiksikìmmatsistutoau ánnak nòkósak. Amó pískan istokínisit. Nisámi ámoiauk, kítoχkot. Moáua ínakumaiskunatàpis, nitóaχpi, kitákoχkototoàu. Osókinistsis ánnyaie ótoχkokaie. Oχsoyísi, ksáχkuyi, mikapípiχ'-kimikùi, ánni omátoχkokaie. I'koχkoàitsim opápaukan. Iχ'-tsístapapistutsìm saámists. Ksáχkumi omátsikimmok. Otáuikaie: Pinauáuaχkàutsit, kakáisokinàkit. Auaχkáutseiniki, mátakitsitokìu, kitákaipànoko. Kimátakáχtsèniχ'-pa, kítokùyi. Kitáksiksistuini. Opápaukani ináuksitaisitàuksiu auaχkáutsisists, anístoau, matáistokitoàuats. Kánnimaie nimátoχksksinoau.

3. A man slept by a buffalo-corral. There he had a dream. He was told by a bull in his dream: Forbid these people. You will profit from my body. He was told by [the bull]: You have done poorly to these my children [by chasing them over the cliff]. Burn up this buffalo-corral. Here is my medicine, I give it to you. [When] a person is wounded [literally: those that are wounded], even if it is a bad case, how he is shot, you can cure him. His elbow-hair was given to him by [the bull]. His tail, earth, [and] red earth were also given to him by [the bull]. He had much profit from his dream. From that [dream] he made medicines. He was also pitied by the earth. He was told by [the earth]: Do not go to war, only doctor. If you go to war, it will never fail, you will be shot. You will not die from it, when you are shot. You will die from old age. From his dream he never failed in times of war, he was shot every time, he would not be shot through

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